

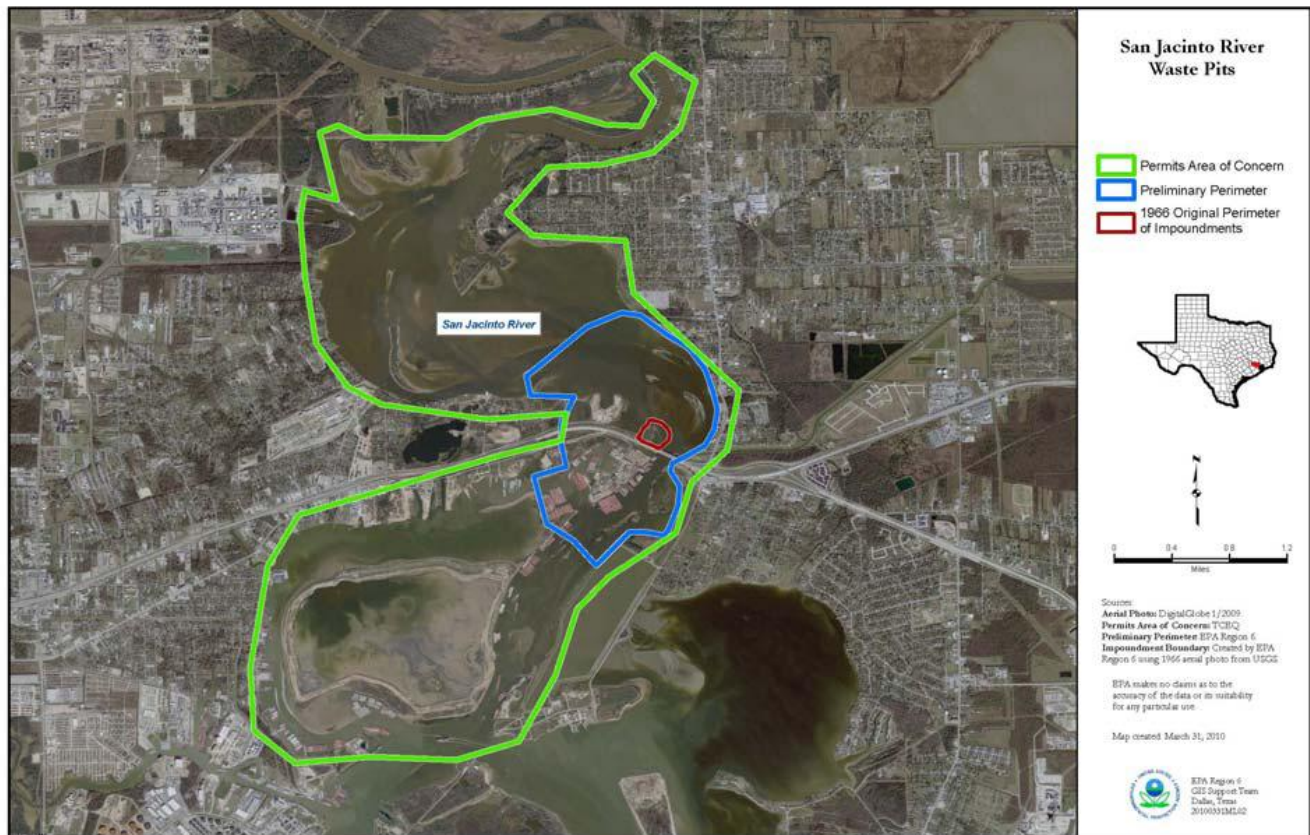
# San Jacinto River Waste Pits, Texas

Site Update – April 2012

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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## BACKGROUND:

The site consists of impoundments located adjacent to the Interstate Highway 10 (I-10) Bridge and the San Jacinto River and the surrounding areas, containing paper mill waste from the Pasadena Champion Paper Mill. Two impoundments are located north of the I-10 Bridge and are partially submerged in the San Jacinto River on the western side in Harris County, Texas. An additional impoundment is suspected to be located directly south of the I-10 Bridge and is currently being investigated under the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study.

The primary hazardous substances documented at the site are dioxins (polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins and polychlorinated dibenzofurans). Dioxin concentrations as high as 360,000 parts per trillion have been found in sediment samples collected from the submerged portion of the waste disposal ponds, as well as dioxin concentrations as high as 3,660 parts per trillion in sediment samples collected outside the original 1966 waste ponds. A fish consumption advisory based on dioxin is in place on this segment of the watershed.

The site was listed on the EPA National Priorities List on March 19, 2008. The EPA SJRWP website can be found online at: [http://www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/texas/san\\_jacinto](http://www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/texas/san_jacinto).

## **STATUS OF CURRENT ACTIVITIES:**

### **I. Community Outreach**

EPA will conduct a Community Awareness Committee meeting with State, Harris County, and local agencies on May 16, 2012, in Pasadena, Texas, to provide updates on current cleanup activities and future events. EPA, in coordination with the Highlands Community Advisory Group, is also planning a late spring community meeting near the site to update residents.

### **II. Source Stabilization**

EPA will conduct a second quarterly cap inspection in May.

### **III. Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS)**

A Potentially Responsible Party began field sampling on April 30, 2012, for the Southern Impoundment. Soil, sediment, and ground water samples are being collected, and sampling is expected to take 1 1/2 to 2 weeks to complete. EPA completed regulatory reviews and responses on the draft Exposure Assessment Memorandum and the draft Toxicological and Epidemiological Studies Memorandum. Reviews by the participating agencies (EPA, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Harris County, Port of Houston Authority and the Trustees) are in progress for a number of reports, including the draft Fate and Transport Model Study Report, the draft Remedial Alternatives Memorandum, and the draft Baseline Ecological Risk Assessment. Reviews of the sampling plan for the River Fleet property located northwest of the waste pits and regulatory reviews are continuing. Further, detailed plans for the proposed cap monitoring approach have been submitted by the Potentially Responsible Parties.

### **IV. Watershed Management**

EPA continues to coordinate with the Port of Houston Authority, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). TCEQ envisions completing the total maximum daily load for Buffalo Bayou with regard to dioxin/furan by the end of 2012 and will put together a monitoring and implementation plan to reduce levels in Buffalo Bayou to within national background levels.

### **V. Enforcement**

The potentially responsible party group continues to conduct the RI/FS under the Unilateral Administrative Order. Respondents continue to work towards resolving the outstanding issue of stipulated penalties resulting from prior noncompliance with the order.